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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6319
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 2917

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RABAT 000658

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DEPARTMENT FOR S/ES-O, DS, AND NEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/14/2017

TAGS: ASEC PTER CASC AMGT MO
SUBJECT: SITUATION REPORT AS OF 1945 GMT 14 APRIL 2007:
SUICIDE BOMBINGS TARGET USG FACILITIES IN CASABLANCA

REF: A. RABAT 657

1B. RABAT 656

Classified by DCM Wayne Bush for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (SBU) At 1700 GMT, DCM convened the Embassy's full EAC, including (via telephone) members of Casablanca's core EAC, to review the latest information, steps taken, and next steps in light of this morning's suicide attacks near the U.S. Consulate-General and American Language Center (ALC) in Casablanca (reftels).

12. (C) The Ambassador spoke by telephone this afternoon with Foreign Minister Benissa. He advised Benissa that the Mission has requested additional protection from Moroccan police services, and told him we are evaluating what impact today's events may have on Mission operations, adding that the Consulate General in Casablanca would be closed for public services on Monday. The Foreign Minister pledged that the GOM would cooperate fully to safeguard U.S. facilities and personnel. The Foreign Minister opined that the essentially unsuccessful attacks were acts of desperation by a terror cell that has been relentlessly hunted by the GOM.

13. (C) The Ambassador is en route to Rabat from Marrakech where he was speaking at an National Democratic Institute sponsored event, accompanied by Congresswoman Jane Harman. He will join the Consul-General to meet the Wali (Governor) of Casablanca on the morning of Sunday April 15. At that meeting, the Ambassador will request that local authorities close traffic on the portion of Boulevard Moulay Yousef that runs directly in front of the Consulate-General building and restrict traffic entering the square in front of Dar America, the Consulate General's public diplomacy facility.

14. (C) The Consulate-General will be closed to the public on Monday, April 16, and only essential personnel (those needed to address immediate security needs) will be asked to report for duty. Currently Boulevard Moulay Yousef remains closed, as does the street directly in front of the ALC. At the present time about 20 police personnel are stationed near the Consulate-General, two police are stationed at nearby Dar America (the American Cultural Center) and several are stationed in front and back of the Consul-General's residence, which has been used throughout the day as the Consulate's alternate command center. At the Embassy, in addition to the static local guard force, 5 additional police personnel have been posted around the perimeter, and police have been posted at the Peace Corps and USAID sites in Rabat.

15. (SBU) Both Embassy Rabat duty officer and Casablanca consular and duty personnel report only a light volume of

telephone inquiries from the American community so far. The warden message has been posted on the Consulate's website and is being disseminated by fax and email.

¶6. (C) Embassy Legat, who visited the site of the attacks in Casablanca earlier today, reported that police tests indicate that the explosives used in today's attack were not prepared at a bomb manufacturing site they had already identified in Casablanca, and are investigating where they were prepared. Police have made an unspecified number of arrests during the day but are focusing on three particular detainees as potentially key to their investigation. Embassy offices remain in constant contact with GOM security contacts, who are providing regular updates on the investigation.

¶7. (C) A/RSO and the Director of the Rabat American School (RAS) met on the afternoon of April 14 with Rabat's deputy police chief, in charge of the district where the school is located. RAS serves the majority of Embassy Rabat's school-age dependents. The police agreed to significantly upgrade their presence around the school, with two additional officers joining police already posted at each of RAS's two entrances. In addition 4-5 motorcycle police will be present during school pick-up and drop-off times as of Monday. Police, RAS Director, and A/RSO agreed on a plan to ban parking along the curb near the school entrance to reduce congestion during pick up and drop off. In addition, RAS guards will be instructed to be more aggressive in challenging persons seeking entry to the compound, backed up by police and school management.

¶8. (C) In Casablanca, six USG school-aged dependents go to three different schools, two American and one French. On Sunday April 15, RSO and Casa Management officer will meet with the management of each of Casablanca's three American

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schools - the Casablanca American School, the George Washington Academy, and the American Academy to discuss current security arrangements and identify areas for further improvement. The American Academy, which no/no USG dependents attend, will be closed on Monday.

¶9. (C) The DCM asked the RSO to lead a working group from the EAC which will meet on Sunday April 15 to review and recommend any additional appropriate security measures for U.S. facilities, including possible further requests to the Moroccan Government.

¶10. (SBU) The Embassy has asked a delegation from the National War College, which was scheduled to arrive in Morocco on April 15, postpone their visit so that Mission personnel can focus on security priorities.

Visit Embassy Rabat's Classified Website;
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/rabat>

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